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A Hassle Over 'Spying' Documentary

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Hours before the National Broadcasting Co.'s TV network aired a news documentary Tuesday night on "The Science of Spying," the B. F. Goodrich Co. yanked its scheduled commercials from the program on the ground that the telecast might "do harm to the government of the United States."

The sponsor said it could get from NBC "no assurance" that U. S. government officials had been consulted on the content of the program.

In reply, the network said NBC News took "full responsibility" for the program. Off the record, an NBC source said the network was not going to be put in the position of defending its presentations and felt that the sponsor does not have to take responsibility for program content. He declined to say whether government officials were consulted.

A statement issued by Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborn, Inc., the advertising agency for Goodrich, said the sponsor and agency had not been permitted to preview the filmed documentary until Monday, the day before its scheduled showing, and had found it at that time "entirely different from the outline" originally submitted by NBC to BBDO.

Goodrich had signed up with the network to sponsor the entire program.

The program synopsis initially submitted by NBC News producer Ted Yates, the agency claimed, said the program would "explore the scope and techniques of the Science of Spying, from electronic miniaturization of spy weaponry to the recruitment and scientific training of crack agents by the East and the West."

What came out, the agency contended, was a program which "treats a controversial public issue in a way which may do harm to the government of the United States, with no assurance that the government of the United States has

been consulted with respect to the contents of the program."

NBC's response to this was that it believed the program "fell well within the broad outlines" of the original proposal.

As the program came out, it consisted largely of interviews and little action. There were conversations with Allen Dulles, former Central Intelligence Agency chief; Richard Bissell, former CIA plans director, and Sen. Eugene McCarthy, D., Minn., a critic of CIA interference in the internal affairs of other nations.

NBC News White House correspondent John Chancellor conducted the on-air inquiry. "In the spy business, the dagger is replacing the cloak," he said in the opening.

The program discussed CIA involvement in Iran, Indonesia, Guatemala and Cuba, among other places.

One reviewer called the program "a shocker," another "a candid, disturbing study."

BBDO said the agency and its client did not question the right of the network to broadcast news, nor did they "insist on censorship of network-produced news in any way," but reserved "the right not to have client advertising exposed on programs in conflict with client advertising policy."

BBDO said it had made "many requests and demands" upon NBC to see the story outline, script and final print, but all of these were refused until the screening finally granted Monday. NBC replied that the final print was shown the client "in accordance with standard policy."

A BBDO spokesman added that Goodrich had signed with NBC as sponsor of the planned program last September.

It would not have been the first time Goodrich has sponsored a news documentary, he reported, although he could not offhand name any such past programs.

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